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OLC 77-0931

12 March 1977

In Congressional Relations
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT: Intelligence Briefings of Congressional Committees

1. I expect to see Representative Thomas Foley (D., Wash.), who is Chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture and Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, early next week.
2. It is my intention to talk with him about the type of briefings that you are going to give to the various committees on topics of current interest to them. We have had a good relationship with Representative Foley in recent years and have worked out arrangements for briefings which would provide the Committee with useful information but protect the sensitivity of some of the material involved. I also plan to talk to Representative Foley (as I mentioned to you yesterday) about the subject of a joint or select committee on intelligence in the House. He is in an influential position as Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, and I think we should solicit his views and his support.
3. I had a preliminary discussion with Werner Brandt, Representative Foley's Legislative Assistant. Mr. Brandt said he was sure that Representative Foley would be willing to have his Committee used as a pilot or sample project for this approach. Mr. Brandt made several observations which I think are of interest:
 - a. He thinks the Committee would be interested in anything we can provide on the subject of Chinese crop forecasting and information on former areas of the world which have experienced food shortages and which now have food surpluses.
 - b. He is concerned as to how, procedurally, this information can be imparted to the Committee or to its Subcommittee in such a way as to protect the sensitivity of our information where necessary. He is edgy about the effects of House Rule XI and also the increasing involvement of members' personal staff aides in the affairs of Congressional committees. He said it is almost impossible to impose any discipline from above.
 - c. He suggests informal sessions in the Chairman's office with members, in whom the Chairman has confidence, over coffee or a drink or visits to the Agency where these discussions could take place in a similar informal environment.

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4. I told Mr. Brandt to think about this between now and the time I meet with Representative Foley, so that we could get together on a suitable forum for these sessions. These comments are merely one man's reactions, but I think they are significant since he and Representative Foley have had some exposure to our briefings, have confidence in our product, yet are concerned that our offer of cooperation not create difficulties for us in terms of leaks. As I believe we have mentioned, Representative Olin E. Teague (D., Texas) of the Committee on Science and Technology, has expressed similar concern about classified briefings over the years and, therefore, has not scheduled formal committee sessions for such briefings.



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